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ABSTRACT

Increased attention to inservice teacher education needs has isolated four major structural dimensions associated with the design of effective inservice programs. The INSERVICE TEACHER EDUCATION REPORT I: ISSUES TO FACE (ISTE) explicates an early model of program construction, utilizing these four concepts. Governance, concerned with the collaborative efforts among various individuals, institutions, and agencies, may be dealt with on the levels of university, school district, program, center, and individual teacher concerns. The modal dimension delineates and systemizes the variety of ways in which inservice education can be presented. Among them are job-embedded, job-related, credential-oriented, professional-organization-oriented, and self-directed approaches. The delivery dimension of the ISTE model involves the appropriate presentation of training to interested teachers and parties. The substantive dimension refers to both the method of presentation and the course content itself. This paper suggests a model for developing inservice teacher education programs from these organizational elements directed intensively towards a cooperative effort between various educational agencies and institutions. (LH)

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COLLABORATE DECISION-MAKING MODEL FOR INSERVICE EDUCATION

by Robert A. Mortenson and Michael P. Grady

Inservice teacher education is currently receiving increased attention from school districts, colleges of education and professional education associations. As Davies and Aquino note, major reasons for this emphasis are: (a) declining preservice enrollments; (b) the lack of school renewal because of the lack of the yearly influx of new personnel; (c) concern on the part of teachers for their own professional development; and (d) public concern manifested through representatives in politics and state legislatures for the upgrading of American education (1).

Although these reasons for increased attention are real and critical, many inservice teacher education programs have been ineffective. According to Louis Rubin, professional growth for teachers through inservice education has not received serious consideration and appropriate schemes or methodologies for monitoring inservice education have not been developed (2).

Inservice teacher education programs have been developed under the aegis of helping K-12 educators meet the changing needs of students and participate in innovative efforts. Within this construct, however, most decisions as to the nature of inservice teacher education ("nature" includes the content, form and arrangement for delivery) have been handled at the administrative level with little or no input from the teaching faculty (3). Further, Howey states that in many aspects inservice teacher education resembles a patchwork quilt because it is not a high priority item but something to be discussed following the business of the day (4). The current situation suggests

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that no model or scheme of inservice education has been developed which indicates a clear concept of purpose, policy, commitment and responsibility (5).

It appears then that inservice teacher education programs are ill-conceived, floundering and unable to meet the needs of the profession. In many instances this is undoubtedly true. However, the literature is interspersed with reports of successful inservice teacher education efforts. Research conducted by the Phi Delta Kappan Commission on Professional Renewal yielded descriptors of programs regarded as worthwhile and highly successful. These descriptors are: " 'Voluntary,' 'developmental,' 'relevant,' 'well-planned,' 'timely,' 'adequately financed,' 'professionally implemented,' 'evaluated,' 'cooperatively planned,' 'responsive,' 'realistic objectives,' 'released time,' 'incentive,' and 'challenging' " (6). The terms are found dispersed throughout articles and reports depicting inservice teacher education efforts. A factor which needs further study is the apparent lack of usable approaches to the area of inservice teacher education. A preponderance of the articles and reports dealing with the subject reflects a low level of generalization. These are usually expository descriptions that do not provide a critical analysis of the inservice programs beyond the level of accounting. Few writers have attempted to survey the literature on inservice education or report on various pieces of educational research, institutes and workshops. (7).

A notable exception to the lack of research data about inservice education is a recently completed survey titled ISTE Report I: Issues to Face. This comprehensive study provides new insights into the subject. One of the findings is that there are four major structural dimensions associated with inservice teacher education. The authors state that these four major dimensions take the form of interrelated systems which link together to mold the operating structure which supports inservice teacher education (8). The systems are Governance, Modal, Delivery and Substantive.

Governance is concerned with collaborative efforts among the various persons, agencies, and institutions involved with continuing education effort. The three levels of Governance are the authority to create and maintain an inservice unit or center, the authority to govern a center, and the governance of the individual teacher's relationship to a unit or center. Although these overlap to some extent, the distinctions are important to the understanding of how collaborative arrangements can function.

At the most general level governance embodies the authority to create, staff, and maintain an inservice training unit or center. Policy at this general level of governance needs to take into account the various governance options that are possible. Universities can create inservice programs, but not require attendance. School districts have the authority to both create inservice programs and compel attendance. State Departments generally attach inservice to particular funded programs. For effective governance to occur at this level, the various entities must be collaboratively represented with adequate communication channels established.

The second level of governance is concerned with the actual operation of an inservice program or center. Although teachers may be represented in the first level of governance, they must be much closer to the governance of a center or program where decisions are made about the particular kinds of training to be offered and the training conditions.

The third level is governance of the individual teacher. Governance at this level has to answer the question of how individual teachers relate to training options. This level suggests such questions as to what extent personal interest should be considered, to what extent an individual should be accountable to the judgment of his peers that he needs training, to what extent the individual needs to be responsive to diagnosis by supervisors and principals,

and to what extent teachers should be required to participate in inservice programs that relate to thrusts within the school or community. Arrangements need to be made so these sources of direction are blended in such a way that they do not conflict with one another.

The Modal dimension reported by the ISTE, involves the variety of ways in which inservice education exists. These modes are: 1) job embedded, 2) job-related, 3) credential-oriented, 4) professional organization-oriented, and 5) self-directed. These modes allow a teacher to be viewed respectively as: 1) an employee of a school, 2) a colleague of other teachers, 3) a student of higher education, 4) a member of a profession, 5) an individual craftsman.

Four examples of the job embedded mode of inservice are committee work for program planning and organization, team teaching, interaction with consultants, and professional reading and curriculum analysis. In performing these tasks, one learns more about teaching. The learning that occurs in this way is random and difficult to measure. However, since most teachers work where other teachers work, programs could easily be structured and planned. The value of job-embedded training lies in its unity with the teacher's job and the economy of accomplishing several purposes at once.

The job-related mode of inservice includes training that is not strictly part of the teacher's job. Traditionally, the most widely used form of this mode has been the college course. Other job-related modes include workshops, teacher exchanges and visits, teacher centers, and training packages. Although many of these training designs have been used successfully for years, certain drawbacks also exist: after school hours are involved, training may be away from the school, dictated from above, or not responsive to teachers' needs.

The most used method of inservice has traditionally been acquiring advanced credentials. This training is very similar to initial preparation in

that the teacher is a student in an institution of higher education. Recent studies suggest, however, that college courses have little relevance for inservice training because the courses are seen as an end, rather than a means for improving classroom performance. New arrangements, in which schools and universities share inservice training, are needed to make inservice education more relevant to the needs of teachers.

Professional organizations are becoming more involved in inservice education. One characteristic of a profession is that it takes upon itself the responsibility for controlling and maintaining the quality of its membership. If teachers are seriously committed to attaining professional stature, then they must fulfill their collective responsibility for inservice education. Examples of this mode include the organizations centered around subject matter areas and their conferences and publications. The NEA and AFT have also recently initiated inservice programs.

The self-directed mode sees the teacher as a self-motivated professional who is interested in maintaining the currency of his skills and knowledge. The motivation for learning comes from the teacher, but time, money, and resources must come from the district or university. Examples of this mode include released time, sabbatical leaves, and professional reading.

The Delivery dimension of the ISTE model involves providing training where people can get it, in accordance with their needs, and providing long range follow-through. This dimension has three major factors. The first is incentives, which are designed to provide motivation for teachers and others to participate in a learning experience. No longer are credentials with additional salary increments sufficient or meaningful incentives. The second delivery factor is the interface, or bringing together of the learner and the training. The closer the distance from the teacher's work site, the easier it is to have

a continuous interface between all aspects of the training and the job functions of the teacher. The third delivery factor is staff. There is an enormous pool of potential training personnel who could participate in the staffing of in-service programs. It is critical that the staff selected is appropriate to the training process.

The Substantive dimension refers to both the process used to deliver content and the content itself. What is learned in any educational setting is directly related to what is taught (content) and how it is taught (process). Hence successful inservice teacher education programs should reflect the learning environment that teachers and others receiving training will be expected to create in their own classrooms along with the types of relationships they will be expected to maintain with the children they teach. Decisions must be made prior to the inception of inservice programs regarding the content that will be taught and the process to be used in teaching it.

However carefully the approaches to teaching are developed, without adequate and relevant content the training will be empty. It has been shown repeatedly that the content needs of teachers are vast and various. There is training substance for all subject areas including the specialized such as physical education, special education and the like. Beyond these "subject matter" needs, social change and new conceptions in education, have in general, generated a variety of new needs which should be addressed by inservice teacher education. It will suffice for the purposes of this paper to mention only a few areas that are of a particular contemporary interest. These are: 1) education that is multicultural, 2) education of the handicapped, 3) early childhood education. There are, of course, many other content areas that can be addressed by inservice teacher education.

The effectiveness of the inservice education venture depends upon the

ability of those involved to arrange collaboratively the interaction of the Governance, Modes, Delivery, and Substantive dimension in a productive manner. This arrangement is delicate. A weakness in one dimension is magnified because it undermines the power of the other dimensions. Conversely, improvement in only one dimension usually does not significantly improve the overall quality of inservice education. Changes must be made simultaneously in all dimensions for improvement to occur.

A Model for Collaboratively Developing Inservice Programs

Historically, control of inservice teacher education has been virtually under the exclusive jurisdiction of institutions of higher education. Currently, joint governance of continuing education is evolving that includes teacher organizations, state departments of education, institutions of higher education, local school districts, and community representatives. As inservice education has grown in complexity and as control has shifted, no one single group has been able to completely take over and deliver significant inservice education programs that meet the needs of the unique learners. Inservice education is too intricate for one group to control the resources necessary to provide solutions and programs. Therefore, it is essential to embark upon collaborative ventures designed to achieve maximum results.

Collaborative inservice teacher education increases the complexity of program design. Joint governance provides for the inclusion of a wide variety of persons with diverse views regarding inservice teacher education. Although inservice teacher education has been shown to have four major structural dimensions (Governance, Modes, Delivery and Substance), the criteria associated with the particular dimensions may not be identical for all role groups (administra-

tors, university faculty, teachers, etc.). Therefore it is important to have a model that will not only recognize these different perceptions but will build upon differing viewpoints and in this way strengthen the resulting programs. If each role group that is designing an inservice teacher education program is given a sample matrix which lists the four dimensions of inservice teacher education along with a list of criteria under each dimension, this becomes a point from which a new matrix can be developed. The new matrix is the result of the reactions, deletions and inclusions of criteria under each major structural dimension by the participants of the specific role groups.

Once role groups have had the opportunity to determine what criteria should be included in an effective inservice teacher education model, they develop rationales to defend and explain their position to other role groups. An exchange of matrices along with written explanations then becomes an initial step in collaborative planning. This process provides an opportunity for persons from different role groups to gain an insight into others' perceptions.

The final step in this collaborative inservice program building process is the formation of design teams composed of representatives from all role groups. The goal of these teams is to determine if a team relationship is desirable and, if feasible, plan the next steps necessary to develop an effective inservice teacher education program. This resultant program reflects input from all role groups via the individual matrices and accompanying rationale along with participation by representatives from specific role groups.

The resultant product is an inservice teacher education program, arrived at collaboratively, which includes criteria relevant to the four major structural dimensions of inservice teacher education. It is difficult to imagine that a design team could develop an inservice teacher education program that was responsive to each and every criteria listed by all representative role

groups. However, the very nature of collaboration and role group input/ rationale would allow the design teams to fashion a program that is far ahead of what is currently being offered.

FOOTNOTES

1. Hopkin M. Davies and John T. Quino, "Collaboration in Continuing Professional Development," Journal of Teacher Education, Vol. XXVI, No. 3 (1975), pp. 274-77.

2. L. J. Rubin, "Teacher Growth in Perspective," in Louis J. Rubin, ed., Improving Inservice Education: Proposals and Procedures for Change, (Boston: Allyn & Bacon, 1971).

3. Gary M. Ingersoll, "Assessing Inservice Training Needs Through Teacher Responses," Journal of Teacher Education, Vol. XXVII, No. 2 (1976), pp. 169-73.

4. Kenneth R. Howey, "Putting Inservice Teacher Education into Perspective," Journal of Teacher Education, Vol. XXVII, No. 2 (1976), pp. 101-105.

5. Roy A. Edelfelt and Margo Johnson, eds. "Rethinking In-service Education," (Washington, D.C.: National Education Association, 1975), p. 5.

6. J. C. King, P. C. Hayes, and I. Newman, "Some Requirements for Successful Inservice Education," Phi Delta Kappan (May 1977), pp. 686-87.

7. Alexander M. Nicholson and Bruce R. Joyce, ISTE Report III; The Literature on Inservice Teacher Education. (Palo Alto, California, Stanford Center for Research and Development in Teaching), p. 4.

8. Bruce Joyce, Kenneth Howey, and Sam Yarger, ISTE Report I; Issues to Face. (Palo Alto, California, Stanford Center for Research and Development in Teaching), pp. 1-36.

BIOGRAPHIC STATEMENT

Robert Mortenson received a B.S. Degree from Morningside College, an M.S. Degree from Syracuse University and an EdD from the University of Missouri-Columbia Since 1975, he has been an Associate Professor in the Department of Secondary/ Post Secondary Education at the University of Nebraska at Omaha. Prior to that, he was at Indiana University in the Division of Teacher Education. He currently serves as Executive Secretary of a six-state Teacher Corps Network. Dr. Mortenson is a member of ATE and numerous other professional organizations.

Michael Grady is an Associate Professor in the Department of Education at St. Louis University. He has served as the Director of a Teacher Corps Project for the past four years and was selected by the USOE to pilot an experimental planning year project. His teaching and research interests include brain research and the split brain theory, educational media, preservice and inservice teacher education and human consciousness. He has published articles on the above topics. Grady is a member of the Missouri Unit and the National Association of Teacher Education.